

From a Radio interview over WMCA on March 17 with Mr. Walter Fairchild by Mr. Charles H. Ingersoll. (Mr. Fairchild is a member of the New York Bar, former President of the Manhattan Single Tax Club and President of the Association for Scientific Taxation.)

Q. "Mr. Fairchild, I understand you are anxious to get rid of this sales tax that has recently been placed on consumers in New York City, and I wish to ask you a few questions about it. For example, what do you suggest in place of the sales tax?"

A. "That's a fair question. I don't think anyone has a right to tell the City Administration to repeal the sales tax without at the same time showing where to get the money which the City must have."

Q. "What do you propose, then?"

A. "I propose a tax by the city on property which gets the benefit of the city taxes that is, the land values of the city."

Q. "In what special form would you impose a tax of this character at this time?"

A. "I propose a special excise tax to be levied immediately on vacant land and on under-improved property; that is, on valuable land which is not used or which is not adequately used."

Q. "Now, Mr. Fairchild, wouldn't this special tax you advocate tend to increase the cost of living?"

A. "No, it would not because it is a tax on the privilege of using city services which are now wasted by the holders of vacant lands and under-improved sites."

Q. "Have you any data showing approximately what proportion of the sites of New York City is inadequately improved?"

A. "We estimate, both in area and land values, about three quarters of Manhattan are under improved. Nearly \$3,000,000,000 of land value in Manhattan is blighted with residence and business slums. This means that the city treasury loses each year more than \$50,000,000 in taxes on under-improved property in Manhattan alone."

Q. "What are the chief factors that operate to create site values in New York?"

A. "The services rendered by the City of New York through its tax budget, population, and the concentration of commercial activities."

Q. "Do you think that the sales tax is worse than many other taxes that we have?"

A. "It is the most burdensome and destructive of all forms of taxation."

Q. "How would your proposed tax affect unemployment relief?"

A. "It would raise more than \$50,000,000 a year and would lessen the need for unemployment relief."

Q. "How would it do that?"

A. "By stimulating building on lots that are now held idle, it would increase employment."

Q. "Why are you so strongly in favor of taxing land values rather than improvements?"

A. "Because land values, being a social creation, rightfully belong to the public and should be taken by the government, which is the agent and instrument of society, for public needs." CHARLES S. PRIZER.